SCAFFOLD SAFETY GUIDELINE

Primary causes of accidents involving scaffolds includes improper design, poor planning for assembly and disassembly, improper planks and guardrails, missing tie-ins and bracing, and loads that are too heavy. Scaffolds must be designed by a Qualified Person and inspected before each use by a Competent Person.

Qualified Person: A Qualified Person has extensive knowledge, training and experience in the design and construction of scaffolds, and can solve problems related to the subject matter, e.g., manufacturer’s authorized representative, qualified design engineer.

Competent Person: A Competent Person, by training, is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards and has authorization to take prompt measures to eliminate them.

Design Criteria

• Scaffold base plates and mudsills must be level, sound, and rigid. Footings must be secure and capable of holding the weight that will be added. The scaffold must be plumb, square, and level.
• The maximum load capacity of the scaffold must be communicated to all employees.
• Scaffold walkways must be fully planked. There must not be more than a 9.5” gap between planks and a guardrail. Planks must be in good condition with no visible defects.
• Scaffold walkways and platforms must be at least 18” wide. If the platforms or walkways are less than 18” wide, guardrails or a personal fall arrest system must be used.
• If a scaffold is more than 2 feet above or below a level, a ladder, ramp or personnel hoist must be used. Stepladders shall not be used to access another level.
• Toeboards at least four inches high must run along all open sides, if there is potential for tools, debris or other small objects to fall and create a hazard to people below.
• Scaffolds must be tied to the building where required.
• Scaffolds must be designed, assembled, used and maintained according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
• Modification or alteration of a scaffold requires the approval of the manufacturer or a Qualified Person.

Fall Protection

• If a scaffold is more than 10 feet above a level, approved fall protection must be used.
• If guardrails are used as fall protection, they must be installed on all open sides and ends. Top rails must be 38” – 45” above the platform. A top rail must support 200 lbs applied in any direction.

Training

• Personnel who assemble, take apart, move, operate, repair, maintain or inspect a scaffold must be trained by a Competent Person.

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